

FACT SHEET



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

General Electric, Tell City, Indiana

Office of Land Quality

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100 N. Senate Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46204

Background:

- General Electric (GE) operated a manufacturing facility at 1412 13th Street in Tell City from the 1940s to 2005. During this time, GE manufactured vacuum tubes and small motors. Solvents were used and stored at the facility as part of the manufacturing process.
- Through recent investigations, GE found volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in the ground water and soil at their facility. Through their efforts to determine the nature and extent of the contamination, they discovered VOCs in ground water, soil, and soil gas beyond their property boundary.
- Due to the facility's history as a RCRA interim status facility, this work is being done under IDEM's Corrective Action enforcement authority. IDEM is authorized to implement the CA Program within the State of Indiana, and IDEM's Hazardous Waste Permit Section is overseeing implementation of the CA Program at the GE Tell City facility.

Current Activities:

- GE has been conducting investigations in the surrounding neighborhood since March 2018 to determine the nature and extent of the contamination. They have recently sampled ground water, soils, and soil gas at multiple locations within Tell City near the GE facility. They have also performed vapor intrusion sampling to evaluate indoor air quality in local homes and businesses.
- GE contacted the owners of 71 structures (residences and businesses), offering to perform vapor intrusion sampling. To date, GE has been allowed to sample 64 of these 71 structures (90%).
- At present, vapor intrusion sampling has detected trichloroethylene (TCE) at a concentration above Indiana's standard for indoor air at one residential property. This detection was in an unfinished basement, and GE has installed a vapor mitigation system at this residence.
- TCE was detected in soil gas under basement slabs at 13 other structures at concentrations exceeding Indiana's standard; however, it was not detected in indoor air at concentrations above Indiana's standard at any of these structures. Out of an abundance of caution, GE installed vapor mitigation systems at these structures.
- GE has installed permanent ground water monitoring wells down-gradient of the facility to be able to monitor ground water quality over time.
- Tell City's public drinking water supply is monitored routinely for regulated VOCs. IDEM's Office of Water Quality has reviewed past compliance sampling results for finished drinking water provided to customers, and no regulated VOC contaminants have been detected. Drinking water in Tell City has met, and continues to meet, Safe Drinking Water Act standards.
- Tell City's drinking water compliance sample results can be viewed on IDEM's Drinking Water Watch website at <https://myweb.in.gov/IDEM/DWW/>
- IDEM and GE are currently evaluating collected data to determine if the nature and extent of contamination has been fully defined. Additional sampling may be required based on the results of the evaluation.

Next Steps:

- Define the sources of contamination at GE's facility and investigate other potential sources of contamination.
- Identify and implement corrective measures necessary to control releases of contaminants from GE's facility and the defined contaminant plume.
- Continued monitoring to identify any additional releases.

Environmental Impacts:

- VOCs present below the ground surface can volatilize and seep as vapors into buildings through cracks in or around building foundations. There can also be exposure through releases of VOCs that leach through soil into the ground water.

IDEM's Role:

- IDEM is responsible for protecting human health and the environment while providing for environmentally sound operations of industrial, agricultural, commercial, and governmental activities vital to a prosperous economy.
- IDEM's Hazardous Waste Permit Section will continue to oversee the implementation of the Corrective Action program at the GE facility to ensure routes of human and environmental exposure are eliminated.

Citizen's Role:

- Citizens should notify IDEM if they have knowledge of additional sources of environmental contamination affecting this investigation or threatening the health and safety of the citizens of Tell City or the surrounding area.

More Information:

- For information about the GE facility in Tell City and the Corrective Action process, contact Chris L. Myer with IDEM's Hazardous Waste Permit Section, at (317) 233-4625; toll free at (800) 451-6027; or via e-mail at cmoyer@idem.IN.gov.
- Documents related to this facility can also be viewed online at IDEM's Virtual File Cabinet (VFC) website using the following steps:
 - Go to <http://vfc.idem.IN.gov/> , which is the VFC's "Document Search" page.
 - Once there, click on the *Alternate* dropdown menu.
 - Select *Hazardous Waste (HW) Program ID*.
 - Enter the HW Program ID, IND006392773, in the *ID #* box to the right of the *Alternate* menu.
 - Click the "*I'm not a robot*" checkbox and wait until a green checkmark appears.
 - Click the *Search* button, which produces one or more links to the documents for this facility.
 - Click the highlighted numbers in the *Doc #* column to view individual documents.
 - Click on the dropdown menu for pages to view additional pages with document links.
- Vapor Intrusion fact sheet:
https://www.in.gov/idem/files/factsheet_olq_remediation_vapor_intrusion.pdf

Media may contact IDEM's Office of Media Relations at (317) 232-8596; toll free at (800) 451-6027; or by e-mail at media@idem.IN.gov.